

This listing of the claims, as shown below pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121, will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in pending U.S. Application Serial No. 10/633,937. The Amendments below indicate changes from the Claims published in the Notice of Allowance issued by the Examiner on August 10, 2010.

Listing of the Claims

What is claimed is:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for creating an automated bidding process among energy Providers in which a moderating computer collects bids from each Provider of a plurality of energy Providers, processes the bids and designates at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to at least one reseller for use by at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller, based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, the method comprising:
 - a. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage data associated with the at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers;
 - b. receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage data has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide electric power or

natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller;

c. processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules to produce processed bid data;

d. storing the bids and the processed bid data in a data base as first bidding data;

e. transmitting at least a portion of the first bidding data to at least one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers; and

f. designating at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer, with each of said designated Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a portion of a specific future time interval,

wherein each part of Steps a.- f. is performed by at least one of [[:]] the moderating computer or the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 1 in which at least a first designated Provider is to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas to be

used by the at least one end-user customer at at least one end-user facility during at least a portion of the specific future time interval.

4. (Cancelled)
5. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 1 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
6. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 1 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying the required elements that must be reflected in the bid for the bid to be considered valid.
7. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 6 in which the bid formulation requirements specify that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
8. (Cancelled)

9. (Cancelled)
10. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 1 comprising, in the moderating computer, receiving decision rules from an administrator associated with the moderating computer or from the at least one reseller, and processing at least a portion of the first bidding data and the decision rules, and designating at least a first designated Provider for the provision of electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
11. (Cancelled)
12. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 1 in which at least a part of the at least a portion of the first bidding data is transmitted to the at least one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers subsequent to designating at least a first designated Provider to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
13. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 1 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one standard unit or at least one block of electric power or natural gas.

14. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 13 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
15. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 13 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
16. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 1 in which at least a first designated Provider is designated to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas for use by the at least one end-user customer during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval, and further including specifying, by at least one of the moderating computer or a first adjunct computer, at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 1 further including transmitting, to at least one of the designated Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas used during at least a part of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval by the at least one end-user customer, said transmitting being performed by at least one of the following: the moderating computer, ~~[[by]]~~ at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, ~~[[by a]]~~ at least one computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one reseller or serving the at least one end-user customer, or ~~[[by a]]~~ at least one computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.
19. (Cancelled)
20. (Currently Amended) A method for creating an automated bidding process among energy Providers in which a moderating computer collects bids from each Provider of a plurality of energy Providers, processes the bids and communicates with a first control computer, thereby enabling the first control computer to designate at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to at least one reseller for use by at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller, based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, the method comprising:
- a. by at least one of ~~[[:]]~~ the moderating computer ~~[[and]]~~ or the moderating computer working in conjunction with the first control computer, transmitting at

least a portion of historical energy usage data associated with the at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller to at least a ~~first~~ portion of the plurality of energy Providers;

- b. by the moderating computer, receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage data has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller;
- c. by the moderating computer, processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules to produce processed bid data;
- d. by the moderating computer, storing the bids and the processed bid data in a data base of the moderating computer as first control computer data;
- e. by the moderating computer, transmitting at least a portion of the first control computer data to the first control computer;
- f. by at least one of the moderating computer ~~[[and]]~~ or the moderating computer working in conjunction with the first control computer, transmitting at least a portion of the first control computer data to at least one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers; and
- g. by the first control computer, designating at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer, with each designated Provider to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas

needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a portion of a specific future time interval.

21. (Cancelled)
22. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 20 in which at least a first designated Provider is to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas to be used by the at least one end-user customer at at least one end-user facility during at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
23. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 20 in which the first control computer designates at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer, with each of said designated Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
24. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 20 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.

25. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 20 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
26. (Cancelled)
27. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 20 comprising, in the first control computer, receiving decision rules from an administrator associated with the first control computer, or from the moderating computer, or from the at least one reseller, and processing at least a portion of the first control computer data and the decision rules, and designating at least a first designated Provider for the provision of electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
28. (Cancelled)
29. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 23 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one standard unit or at least one block of electric power or natural gas.

30. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 29 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
31. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 29 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
32. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 20 further including transmitting, to at least one of the designated Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas used during at least a part of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval by the at least one end-user customer, said transmitting being performed by at least one of the following: the moderating computer, [[by]] at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, [[by]] the first control computer, [[by an]] at least a first adjunct computer to the control computer, [[by a]] at least one computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one reseller or serving the at least one end-user customer, or [[by a]] at least one computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.

33. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 20 in which the first control computer is operated by the moderating computer, by an adjunct computer to the moderating computer, by the at least one reseller, or by a first DISCO serving the at least one reseller or serving the at least one end-user customer.
34. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 20 in which at least a portion of the functions of the first control computer is performed by at least one adjunct computer.
35. (Original) A method of Claim 20 in which the first control computer is a computer adjunct to the moderating computer.

Claims 36 -48 (Cancelled).

49. (Currently Amended) A method for conducting an automated bidding process among a plurality of energy Providers, such process utilizing a moderating computer and based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, the method comprising:

- a. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage data associated with at least one end-user customer of at least one reseller to at least a first portion of the plurality of energy Providers;
- b. receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage data has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller;
- c. processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules;
- d. distributing at least a portion of processed bid information to at least one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers; and
- e. designating, on the basis of the processed bid information, at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer, with each designated Provider to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a portion of a specific future time interval[[:]] .

wherein each of Steps a., d. and e. is performed by at least one of [[:]] the moderating computer, the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer, the moderating computer working in conjunction with a control computer, or the moderating computer working in conjunction with both at least one adjunct computer and the control computer, and wherein each of

Steps b. and c. is performed by at least one of [[:]] the moderating computer or the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer.

50. (Cancelled)

51. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 in which at least a first designated Provider is to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas to be used by the at least one end-user customer at at least one end-user facility during the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.

52. (Cancelled)

53. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 49 in which at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers are designated, on the basis of the processed bid information, to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer, with each of said designated Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.

54. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 49 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
55. (Original) A method of Claim 49 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying the required elements that must be reflected in the bid for the bid to be considered valid.
56. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 55 in which the bid formulation requirements specify that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
57. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 further including, ~~[[in]]~~ by at least one of the moderating computer or ~~[[an]]~~ a first adjunct computer, distributing at least a portion of the auction rules to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers.
58. (Cancelled)

59. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 further including, ~~[[in]]~~ by at least one of the moderating computer or ~~[[an]]~~ a first adjunct computer, transmitting at least a portion of the processed bid information to the at least one reseller.
60. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 further including, ~~[[in]]~~ by at least one of the moderating computer, ~~[[in an]]~~ a first adjunct computer, or ~~[[in]]~~ the control computer, notifying a first DISCO serving the at least one reseller, or serving the at least one end-user customer, of the designation of at least a first designated Provider to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
61. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 49 including distributing at least a part of the at least a portion of the processed bid information to the at least one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers subsequent to the designating of at least a first designated Provider to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
62. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 53 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one standard unit or at least one block of electric power or natural gas.

63. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 62 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
64. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 62 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
65. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 including designating at least a first designated Provider to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas for use by the at least one end-user customer during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval, and further including specifying, by at least one of the moderating computer, a first adjunct computer, or the control computer, at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
66. (Cancelled)

67. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 further including transmitting, to at least one of the designated Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas used during at least a part of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval by the at least one end-user customer, said transmitting being performed by at least one of the following: the moderating computer, ~~[[by]]~~ at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, ~~[[by]]~~ the control computer, ~~[[by an]]~~ at least a first adjunct computer to the control computer, ~~[[by a]]~~ at least one computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one reseller or serving the at least one end-user customer, or ~~[[by a]]~~ at least one computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.
68. (Currently Amended) A method for creating an automated bidding process among energy Providers for the benefit of end users in which a moderating computer collects bids from each Provider of a plurality of energy Providers, processes the bids and communicates with a first control computer, thereby enabling the first control computer to designate at least a first Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to at least one end user, based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, the method comprising:
- a. by at least one of the moderating computer ~~[[and]]~~ or the moderating computer working in conjunction with the first control computer, transmitting at

- least a portion of historical energy usage data associated with the at least one end user to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers;
- b. by the moderating computer, receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage data has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user;
 - c. by the moderating computer, processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules to produce processed bid data;
 - d. by the moderating computer, storing the bids and the processed bid data in a data base of the moderating computer as first control computer data;
 - e. by the moderating computer, transmitting at least a portion of the first control computer data to the first control computer;
 - f. by at least one of the moderating computer ~~[[and]]~~ or the first control computer, transmitting at least a portion of the first control computer data to at least one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers; and
 - g. by the first control computer, designating at least the first Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user, with each designated Provider to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas to be used by the at least one end user at at least one end-user facility during at least a portion of a specific future time interval.

69. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
70. (Original) A method of Claim 68 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying the required elements that must be reflected in the bid for the moderating computer to consider the bid valid.
71. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 70 in which the bid formulation requirements specify that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.
72. (Cancelled)
73. (Cancelled)
74. (Cancelled)

75. (Original) A method of Claim 68 comprising, in the first control computer, receiving decision rules from an administrator associated with the first control computer, or from the moderating computer, or from the at least one end user, processing at least a portion of the first control computer data and the decision rules, and designating at least the first Provider for the provision of electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user.
76. (Cancelled)
77. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which the moderating computer or the first control computer transmits at least a part of the at least a portion of the first control computer data to the at least one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers subsequent to the first control computer designating at least the first Provider to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user.
78. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one standard unit or at least one block of electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user.

79. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 78 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
80. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 78 in which the auction rules specify that the bids indicate the quantity of standard units or blocks of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.
81. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which at least a first designated Provider is designated by the first control computer to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user for use during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval, and further including specifying, by at least one of the moderating computer, a first adjunct computer, or the first control computer, at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed for use by the at least one end user during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
82. (Cancelled)

83. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which the first control computer is operated by the moderating computer, by an adjunct computer, by the at least one end user, by a reseller to the at least one end user, or by a first DISCO serving the at least one end user.
84. (Original) A method of Claim 68 in which the first control computer is a computer adjunct to the moderating computer.
85. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which at least a portion of the functions of the first control computer is performed by at least one adjunct computer.
86. (Currently Amended) A method for conducting an automated bidding process among a plurality of energy Providers for the benefit of Buyers, such process utilizing a moderating computer and based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, the method comprising:
- a. receiving, from at least one Buyer, at least one request for future energy supply, consisting of electric power or natural gas;
 - b. processing the at least one request and distributing at least a portion of at least one processed request to a plurality of energy Providers;
 - c. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage data associated with the at least one Buyer to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers;

- d. receiving, from at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage data has been transmitted in Step c., bids to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one Buyer;
- e. processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules;
- f. distributing at least a portion of processed bid information to at least one bidding Provider of the at least two Providers; and
- g. designating, on the basis of the processed bid information, at least one Provider of the at least two Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one Buyer, with each designated Provider to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer during at least a portion of a specific future time interval for use at at least one end-user facility,

wherein each of Steps a., c., f. and g. is performed by at least one of [[:]] the moderating computer, the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer, the moderating computer working in conjunction with a control computer, or the moderating computer working in conjunction with both at least one adjunct computer and the control computer, and wherein each of Steps b., d. and e. is performed by at least one of [[:]] the moderating computer or the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer.

87. (Cancelled)
88. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 86 in which at least two Providers are designated, on the basis of the processed bid information, to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one Buyer, with each of said designated Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer for use during the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
89. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 86 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
90. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 86 in which, as part of the auction rules, bid formulation requirements specify that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one Buyer.
91. (Cancelled)

92. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 86 including distributing at least a part of the at least a portion of the processed bid information to the at least one bidding Provider of the at least two Providers subsequent to the designating of at least a first designated Provider to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one Buyer.
93. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 86 further including transmitting, to at least one of the designated Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas supplied to the at least one Buyer during at least a part of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval for use at the at least one end-user facility, said transmitting being performed by at least one of the following: the moderating computer, [[by]] at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, [[by]] the control computer, [[by an]] at least a first adjunct computer to the control computer, [[by a]] at least one computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one Buyer, or [[by a]] at least one computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.
94. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 86 including distributing at least a portion of the at least one processed request to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers by posting the at least a portion of the at least one processed

request on a website or computer bulletin board accessible to the at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers.

95. (Original) A method of Claim 86 including receiving bids from the at least two Providers by means of a software defined template.
96. (Cancelled)
97. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 86 including designating at least a first designated Provider to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas to the at least one Buyer for use during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval, and further including specifying, by at least one of the moderating computer, a first adjunct computer, or the control computer, at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer for use during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
98. (Cancelled)

99. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 88 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one standard unit or at least one block of electric power or natural gas.
100. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 99 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
101. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 99 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one Buyer.
102. (Currently Amended) A method for creating an automated bidding process among energy Providers in which a moderating computer collects bids from each Provider of a plurality of energy Providers, processes the bids and designates at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to at least one end user, based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, the method comprising:

- a. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage information associated with the at least one end user to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers;
- b. receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage information has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user;
- c. processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules to produce processed bid data;
- d. storing the bids and the processed bid data in a data base as first bidding data;
- e. transmitting at least a portion of the first bidding data to at least one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers; and
- f. designating at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at at least one end-user facility during a specific future time interval,

wherein each of Steps a.- f. is performed by at least one of [[:]] the moderating computer or the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer.

103. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 102 in which at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers are designated to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user, with each of said Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use during the specific future time interval.
104. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 102 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a ~~segment~~ portion of the specific future time interval.
105. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 102 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.
106. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 103 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one block of electric power or natural gas.

107. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 106 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a segment of the specific future time interval.
108. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 106 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.
109. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 102 in which at least a first designated Provider is designated to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user for use during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval, and further including specifying, by at least one of the moderating computer or a first adjunct computer, at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
110. (Cancelled).

111. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 102 further including transmitting, to at least one of the designated Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas used by the at least one end user during at least a part of the specific future time interval at the at least one end-user facility, said transmitting being performed by at least one of the following: the moderating computer, ~~[[by]]~~ at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, ~~[[by a]]~~ at least one computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one end user, or ~~[[by a]]~~ at least one computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.
112. (Cancelled)
113. (Currently Amended) A method for conducting an automated bidding process among a plurality of energy Providers for the benefit of end users, such process utilizing a moderating computer and based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, the method comprising:
- a. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage information associated with at least one end user to at least a portion of a plurality of energy Providers;
 - b. receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy

- usage information has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to the at least one end user;
- c. processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules;
 - d. transmitting at least a portion of processed bid information to at least one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers; and
 - e. designating, on the basis of the processed bid information, at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user, with each of said designated Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at at least one end-user facility during a specific future time interval,
- wherein each of Steps a., d. and e. is performed by at least one of [[:]] the moderating computer, the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer, the moderating computer working in conjunction with a control computer, or the moderating computer working in conjunction with both at least one adjunct computer and the control computer, and wherein each of Steps b. and c. is performed by at least one of [[:]] the moderating computer or the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer.

114. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 113 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.
115. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 113 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one block of electric power or natural gas.
116. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 115 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.
117. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 113 in which at least a part of the at least a portion of the processed bid information is transmitted to the at least one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers subsequent to the designating of the at least one Provider to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user.
118. (Cancelled)

119. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 113 further including, ~~in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the control computer,~~ specifying, by at least one of the moderating computer, a first adjunct computer, or the control computer, at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
120. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 113 in which at least a first Provider is designated to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas to provide the at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval, and further including, ~~in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the control computer,~~ specifying, by at least one of the moderating computer, a first adjunct computer, or the control computer, at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
121. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 113 further including transmitting, to at least one of the designated at least two Providers, data indicating at least a

portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas used by the at least one end user during at least a part of the specific future time interval at the at least one end-user facility, said transmitting being performed by at least one of the following: the moderating computer, [[by]] at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, [[by]] the control computer, [[by an]] at least a first adjunct computer to the control computer, [[by a]] at least one computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one end user, or [[by a]] at least one computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.

122. (Cancelled)

123. (Currently Amended) A method for conducting an automated bidding process among a plurality of energy Providers for the benefit of end users, such process utilizing a moderating computer and based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, the method comprising:

- a. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage information associated with at least one end user to at least a portion of a plurality of energy Providers;
- b. receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage information has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to the at least one end user;

- c. processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules;
 - d. transmitting at least a portion of processed bid information to at least one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers; and
 - e. designating, on the basis of the processed bid information, at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at at least one end-user facility during a specific future time interval, such that the designated Providers, when their respective designations to supply are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a portion of the specific future time interval,
- wherein each of Steps a., d. and e. is performed by at least one of [[:]] the moderating computer, the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer, the moderating computer working in conjunction with a control computer, or the moderating computer working in conjunction with both at least one adjunct computer and the control computer, and wherein each of Steps b. and c. is performed by at least one of [[:]] the moderating computer or the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer.

124. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 123 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.
125. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 123 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one block of electric power or natural gas.
126. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 125 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.
127. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 123 further including, ~~in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the control computer,~~ specifying, by at least one of the moderating computer, a first adjunct computer, or the control computer, at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.

128. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 123 in which at least a first Provider is designated to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas to provide the at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval, and further including, ~~in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the control computer,~~ specifying, by at least one of the moderating computer, a first adjunct computer, or the control computer, at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
129. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 123 further including transmitting, to at least one of the designated at least two Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas used by the at least one end user during at least a part of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval at the at least one end-user facility, said transmitting being performed by at least one of the following: the moderating computer, ~~[[by]]~~ at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, ~~[[by]]~~ the control computer, ~~[[by an]]~~ at least a first adjunct computer to the control computer, ~~[[by a]]~~ at least one computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one end user, or ~~[[by~~

a)] at least one computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.

130. (Currently Amended) A method for conducting an automated bidding process among a plurality of energy Providers for the benefit of Buyers, such process utilizing a moderating computer and based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, the method comprising:
- a. receiving, from at least one Buyer, at least one request for future energy supply, consisting of electric power or natural gas;
 - b. processing the at least one request and distributing at least a portion of at least one processed request to a plurality of energy Providers;
 - c. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage information associated with the at least one Buyer to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers;
 - d. receiving, from at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage information has been transmitted in Step c., bids to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one Buyer;
 - e. processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules;
 - f. transmitting at least a portion of processed bid information to at least one bidding Provider of the at least ~~three~~ two Providers; and

g. designating, on the basis of the processed bid information, one Provider of the at least two Providers, with the one designated Provider designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer during the specific future time interval for use at the at least one end-user facility,

wherein each of Steps a., c., f. and g. is performed by at least one of [[:]] the moderating computer, the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer, the moderating computer working in conjunction with a control computer, or the moderating computer working in conjunction with both at least one adjunct computer and the control computer, and wherein each of Steps b., d. and e. is performed by at least one of [[:]] the moderating computer or the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer.